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SKETCH
OF
THE ORIGIN AND RESULTS
OF
Ladies' Prison Associations,
&c.









SKETCH
OF
THE ORIGIN AND RESULTS
OF
Ladies' Prison Associations,
WITH
HINTS FOR THE FORMATION
OF
LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS.

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SKETCH
OF
THE ORIGIN AND RESULTS
OF
Ladies' Prison Associations,
ETC.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

IT having been suggested, that a short account of the commencement, progress, and success of the measures adopted for the Reformation of Female Prisoners would be useful, not only for the information of those who are disposed to aid and support, but also for the encouragement of those who are willing personally to labour in this deeply interesting and necessary work; the Committee of the Ladies' British Society, established for the reformation of Female Pri-

soners, deem it incumbent upon them to make public the following statement:—

In the year 1813, in consequence of the representations of several individuals of the Society of Friends, Mrs. Joseph Fry first visited the Prison of Newgate.

In two wards and two cells, comprising about 190 superficial square yards, 300 females were at that time confined—those who had not been tried, and who are, therefore, by our laws presumed innocent,—those who had been convicted, whatever might have been the magnitude of their offence (even though they had received sentence of death) were associated together without distinction or classification; and saw their friends, took charge of their children, cooked, washed, ate, drank, and slept within this limited space.

It is not possible, neither would it be desirable, accurately to represent the consequences which ensued; the atmosphere of the rooms, the ferocious manners and expressions of the women toward each other, and

her watch before she entered amongst these wretched beings, observing, that even his presence would not prevent its being violently torn from her.

In consequence of this visit, clothes were procured for some of the poor children by means of private benevolence, and the Bible was occasionally read to the prisoners; but it was not until Christmas, 1816, that Mrs. Fry's visits became regular; and in the mean time, the Gaol Committee made several arrangements to mitigate the horrors which had previously prevailed.

It was, however, with great pain that Mrs. Fry found many of the women playing at cards—others reading improper books; others again begging at the grating and fighting for the money; in short, that vice, and its attendant, misery, were still triumphant throughout the gaol.

The prisoners complained, and daily renewed their complaint, that they wanted employment; and it soon became evident that this was the most serious evil and predisposing cause of every vice; the habits of those individuals who were disposed to idleness,—

became confirmed, and the industrious were soon contaminated; there was nothing good appointed to be done, and the mind therefore turned naturally to that which was bad: many who entered Newgate comparatively innocent, left it depraved and profligate, and whilst society, in theory, appeared to be punishing individuals for past offences, they were in fact not only providing leisure and opportunity to learn, but even masters to teach, the mode of committing more extensive and injurious crimes.

As at that period there was not any hope of procuring proper employment for the women, the exertions were originally confined to about thirty children, who, surrounded by every thing that could contaminate the mind and destroy the morals, appeared at the same time to suffer greatly in bodily health from the pestilential state of the atmosphere, and the want of proper food, clothing, and exercise.

A few of these Children had been committed for offences, but the greater part were under seven years of age, and according to the rules of the prison admitted to be with

the convicts ; abandoned as their parents were, it was still hoped they would be found alive to the feelings of natural affection. After one or two visits, Mrs. Fry was, at her own request, admitted alone in the wards, and on this occasion she made her proposal for the establishment of a School for the Children of the Prisoners—a proposal which was received even by the most hardened with gratitude and with tears of joy ; they themselves selected a very fit prisoner to act as school-mistress : in a few days, through the kindness of the Sheriffs, a separate cell was obtained, and the school proceeded most rapidly, interrupted only by the anxious entreaties of young women, and even of aged prisoners, to be taught and employed.

Mrs. Fry, and a few of her friends, who had associated with her for this purpose, continued their attendance at the school daily, and it pleased God to bless their efforts with the happiest success ; it was these daily visits which brought them more and more intimately acquainted with the state of the Female Prisoners in general, and excited in their minds the strongest wish to become in-

strumental in procuring instruction and employment, for all those women who had been sentenced.

Their proposals were objected to by all who dread any novelty, and were not warmly supported even by those who had made the amelioration of the condition of our species a leading object of attention ; so little did the reformation of a London female thief, who had passed through every gradation of vice, and been hardened in iniquity by associates the most profligate and abandoned, appear to them within the sober bounds of probability.

A continued intercourse with these wretched beings however, the feeling they had shown as mothers, and the conviction that the grace of God is open to all who really seek it, disposed Mrs. Fry and her companions to persevere, and they determined, if a Female Committee could be obtained to share their labour, and a Matron be appointed to remain night and day in the prison, they would at least make the experiment. Several other Ladies soon came forward, who were willing to devote their time

to this labour as a Committee ; a Matron, competent to the office, was appointed ; application was at the same time made to the Ordinary and Governor of Newgate, and subsequently to the Sheriffs : these gentlemen, though they despaired of success, yet evinced the most favourable dispositions towards the experiment, provided the consent of the female prisoners could be obtained. This condition was cheerfully acceded to by the Ladies' Committee ; the prisoners were in consequence assembled, the object was explained to them, and their determination was unanimously expressed to support the plan, and to abide by whatever rules might be established.

Messrs. Richard Dixon and Co., Contractors for the clothing sent to Botany Bay, undertook, with the most liberal kindness, to provide work ; a School-room was obtained, and in a few days the Ladies' Committee, and all the tried female prisoners, were assembled. At their first meeting, the comforts to be derived from sobriety and industry—the pleasure and profit of doing right, and obtaining knowledge—the happiness and

peace of a life devoted to religion and virtue, were dwelt upon by one of the Ladies at considerable length, and the prisoners were at the same time told, that the Committee did not come with any positive authority—that it was not intended that they alone should command and the prisoners obey; but that every regulation should be made, and every monitor appointed, with their own entire concurrence.

Some rules which had been previously sketched by a Member of the Committee, were then read, separately considered, and put to the vote, and it was most gratifying to see every hand held up in testimony of approval.

A copy of these Rules, as amended by subsequent experience, will be found on page 21: those at first adopted, provided for employment, the appointment of a Matron, reading the Holy Scriptures, division into classes, choosing monitors for the superintendence of conduct, the abandonment of gaming, begging, evil-speaking, improper books, &c.

When the Rules were approved, a suf-

cient number of monitors (one for every twelve prisoners) was appointed in a similar manner.

One of the Visitors then read aloud the 15th chapter of St. Luke—the parable of the Prodigal Son appearing peculiarly applicable to the state of the audience,—and after a period of strict silence, the monitors withdrew with their respective classes in the most orderly manner to the wards or places of confinement; in this manner employment and instruction were daily afforded—the change was almost instantaneous—sanguine as some members of the Committee had been, even they had not calculated on the effect which confinement has been almost invariably found to produce on minds accustomed to receive their principal impressions from outward objects, and to whom, therefore, reflection, new and disagreeable as in their circumstances it must be, affords no substitute for frequent change of place, and the rapid current of passing events. The unfortunate beings confined in Newgate had sought, in the indulgence of every vice, that

stimulus, to which when at large, they had been daily accustomed; and it had so far failed them, that it is not improbable they would have been prepared to receive with satisfaction an alteration, even less beneficial than the one proposed to their adoption.

So rapid and complete was the success of the plan, that, after a lapse of a fortnight, the Governor candidly admitted he hardly knew this part of the prison again, and at the end of a month, the Committee were so fully satisfied, as to feel anxious to give permanence to the measure, and they therefore applied to the Corporation of London, that it might be made a part of the prison regulations.

In consequence of this application, the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, and several of the Aldermen, attended at the prison, and were equally astonished and pleased with the orderly and sober deportment of the prisoners; their attention during the time a portion of the Scriptures was read; the obedience and respect shown to the Visitors and Monitors: the cheerful attention visible

in their countenances and manner, and the absence of every thing like noise, tumult, or contention.

Many of these gentlemen had known Newgate before, and had witnessed scenes exhibiting perhaps the utmost extent of guilt and misery—they now found riot, licentiousness and filth, exchanged for order, sobriety, and regularity. And to shew that the importance of the change was felt and appreciated, the Magistrates at once adopted the whole plan as part of the system of Newgate; undertook to defray a portion of the expense of the Matron; and gave the Ladies' Committee, in case it should at any time become necessary, power to punish the refractory by a short confinement.

Thus aided and supported, the Committee continued their labours: * the deviations from the rules prescribed were few, and by no means important, notwithstanding Newgate contained at this period, as indeed it must at all times contain, the very refuse of London: Women who have been again and again the inmates of prisons, and

* See Appendix A.

to whom thieving has, for a long period, been the only means of support ; the Visitors found themselves invariably treated with respect and gratitude : no article of dress was lost or stolen, though during the first year alone, 20,000 articles were made up. Many prisoners received the rudiments of education, and heard, for the first time, the leading truths of Christianity ; others left the prison who are now filling their stations in life uprightly and respectably, and the number of re-commitments became sensibly lessened.

After the Newgate Association had been established six months, a very urgent petition was presented from the women waiting their trial, for similar means of improvement to those afforded the tried prisoners.

It was not possible to refuse such a request ; arrangements were in consequence made, and the necessary rules prepared. There was, however, a difficulty in procuring sufficient work ; it was found also, that the minds of the prisoners, dwelling on the probability of a speedy release, either from the nature of the evidence against them, or the

general uncertainty of the law, and frequently employed likewise in the preparations for trial, were less open to instruction and improvement; there was not that feeling of certainty and fixedness, which formed so material a feature with the tried prisoners. An anxious desire of improvement indeed, existed in some cases, but as there was not space in the prison to attempt a classification, the feeling was soon injured, or altogether destroyed; the experiment therefore neither did nor could be expected to answer to the same extent. Still good was done—some who laboured diligently were greatly improved; gross vice was much checked, and each individual had an opportunity at least of doing good rather than evil. The Ladies' Association still continue to instruct all of this class who are willing to learn, and the Scriptures are daily read among them, either by one of the Visitors or the Sub-Matron.

To return to the tried prisoners, each succeeding month brought additional and most gratifying evidence of success.

The Governor, the Matron, and the Chap-

lain of the Penitentiary at Millbank, concurred in opinion, that the female prisoners from Newgate were far more correct and decent than those from any other prison. It had, from time immemorial, been the practice of prisoners sentenced to transportation, on the night previous to their departure for Botany Bay, to pull down and break every thing within their reach, and to go off shouting with the most hardened and shameless effrontery. After these regulations had been established however, to the surprise of the oldest Turnkeys and other inmates of the prison, no noise was heard, and not a window intentionally broken. The Prisoners took an affectionate leave of their companions, and expressed the utmost gratitude to their benefactors; entered their conveyances without tumult, and so orderly was their behaviour, that only one half the usual escort was deemed necessary.

To the individuals who had thus conducted themselves, the Committee felt bound to continue their good offices, even after they had left the walls of the prison; and it soon therefore became a part, and though a la-

brious, by no means an unpleasing part of their duty, to visit the Female Convict Ships; to provide copies of the Holy Scriptures, and suitable books, both for children and adults; to furnish any extra articles of clothing that were essential, and to make arrangements for the occupation and instruction of the convicts during their long voyage.

In the year 1818, many circumstances, particularly the publication of Mr. Buxton's valuable essay on Prison Discipline, concurred to direct public attention to the neglected state of our prisons, and a Society was about that time formed, having for its object, as well the improvement of Prison Discipline, as the reformation of Juvenile Offenders.* The labours of this Society have been the means of producing effects the most extensive and important. Its reports contain a mass of very valuable information, not only upon the state of crime, and the actual condition of Prisons in our own and in foreign countries, but also on the

* The Committee meet at 18, Aldermanbury.

Criminal Law ; the administration of justice, and other interesting topics. It is most gratifying to find, that its numerous suggestions have been received with great respect, and been attended with the happiest results —it has, in fact, given an impulse and efficiency to the plans of the benevolent Howard, and the philanthropic Neild, which no one, however sanguine, had previously ventured to contemplate.

Their Report of 1824 forcibly directs the attention of the public to the following among other points—

The reformation of the Borough Gaols, now much neglected.

An increased separation and classification of prisoners even in the County Gaols.

A more frequent Gaol delivery.

The propriety of admitting accused persons to bail in an extended number of cases.

The expediency of altering or rebuilding Gaols on approved plans, which (if required) the Society are willing gratuitously to furnish.

The propriety of having, whenever it may

be practicable, distinct Gaols for Men and Women.

The advantage of well-regulated tread-wheels.

The establishment of a large Penitentiary for juvenile offenders, and

The benefits to be expected from Infant Schools.

The following extracts are quoted as most appropriate to the subject of this Sketch.

“ A prison inflicts on the guilty the terrors of the Law, but while the enforcement of its penalties is due to the public protection, justice protests against undue severity.

“ A prison is the habitation of the unfortunate and the destitute, and abundant are the opportunities which it presents of extending protection to the friendless, and relief to the distressed.

“ A prison is the abiding place of the ignorant and the depraved ; where, impressed by sorrow, and humbled by correction, the guilty may be aroused by the warnings, enlightened by the precepts, and consoled by the mercies of the gospel.”

The complete success of the Ladies' New-gate Association, and the attention which the formation of the Prison Discipline Society drew to the state of our prisons, tended materially to promote the formation of Ladies' Associations.

In 1819, an Association was commenced at Liverpool, and it soon fulfilled the most sanguine expectations: a second was formed in the Borough Compter (Southwark), a small but overflowing prison;—here likewise, notwithstanding the most serious obstacles, the Committee reported, that the utility of employment—the importance of religious instruction—of frequent inspection—of orderly habits—and of a treatment uniting firmness with kindness—were speedily apparent. They were also enabled to detail several instances in which individuals had been brought, not only from a life of vice and wretchedness to one of honesty and comfort, but, through the Divine Goodness, to a knowledge of that Saviour, whom to know is “life eternal.”

The proposals for forming different Ladies' Associations in the United Kingdom—

in Russia, Italy, and Switzerland; and the increased correspondence which in consequence resulted to the Ladies' Association for Newgate, began to interfere materially with their ordinary labours, and first suggested the idea of a more general Society, for the purpose of communicating with the Associations already formed, as well as with any Ladies disposed to form similar ones: to propose rules for their guidance; to lay before the public, Abstracts of their reports; and generally to promote the reformation of female prisoners in our own and foreign countries.

After several preliminary meetings, a Society for these objects was instituted in April, 1821, of which the following are the Rules:

- I. THAT the designation of this Society shall be "THE BRITISH SOCIETY OF LADIES, FOR PROMOTING THE REFORMATION OF FEMALE PRISONERS."
- II. That the Members of all Local Associations, formed for a similar purpose in Great Britain and Ireland, shall be considered Members of this Society, and entitled to attend its general meetings.
- III. That the business of this Society shall be conducted

by two Treasurers, two or more Secretaries, and a Committee, consisting of not less than twelve other Members, annually appointed.

- IV. That the Committee meet *quarterly*, on a day to be fixed by themselves; and that five Members be competent to transact business.
- V. That it shall be the duty of the Committee to receive and consider reports from Local Associations, and to afford them such advice and encouragement as appear requisite—to correspond with Foreign Societies established for a similar purpose—and, generally, to adopt such measures as may facilitate the attainment of the object in view.
- VI. That the Annual General Meetings of this Society be held at the Friends' Meeting House, St. Martin's Lane, Charing Cross, in the month of June.

Having given a brief sketch of the origin and progress of the Ladies' Prison Association, and from them the Rise of the British Society for Promoting the Reformation of Female Prisoners, we now proceed to offer to the reader a few remarks respecting the system pursued and recommended by the Members of that Society in visiting and superintending the Female inmates of our Prisons. The observations and advice, which we

shall venture to offer are drawn up by Mrs. Fry, and relate to the following successive points. *First*, the formation of Ladies' Committees. *Secondly*, the proper deportment of the visitors towards the prisoners and towards the officers of the prison. *Thirdly*, the necessity of employing female officers in gaols, and their proper character. *Fourthly*, classification and inspection. *Fifthly*, instruction. *Sixthly*, employment. *Seventhly*, medical aid, food, clothing, and bedding. And, *lastly*, the attention required in the care of criminals after their dismissal from prison.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE FORMATION OF LADIES' COMMITTEES FOR VISITING AND SUPERINTENDING FEMALES IN PRISON.

HIGHLY desirable as it is that even *individuals* who can obtain no coadjutors in the work, should devote part of their time to the important object of visiting prisons, there are many obvious reasons why the formation of *regular committees* for the purpose, wherever found possible, is greatly preferable.

In the first place, since our life and health are uncertain, and even our abode frequently liable to change, the association of two or more persons in the prosecution of such objects is indispensable to their being steadily and constantly pursued: thus, when one labourer fails, the work will not cease, and others will be ready to supply her place.

There are, secondly, a variety of engagements for those who undertake the care of

female prisoners; and these engagements will be found suited to a variety of persons. For instance, one may attend to the employment, a second to the classification, a third to the instruction, of the prisoners: while, in the conducting of certain parts of the system —such particularly as appertain to the religious improvement of the prisoners—all the visitors will unite.

In the third place, where there are several visitors, no individual among them is required to give up for the object more than a very limited portion of time. If, for example, there are seven ladies on the committee, the prison may be properly attended to, if each visitor will devote to the purpose a part of one morning only in the week.

Fourthly, a committee will often arrive at sounder and wiser conclusions on any practical question than an individual would be likely to form. The ladies who compose such a committee may mutually assist each other's judgment, and support one another in their respective exertions.

Fifthly, the business in hand, under the care of a regular and judicious committee,

will be generally conducted with greater order, method, and regularity, than will probably attach to the efforts of any one person.

And, lastly, when representations are to be made, or requests preferred, to magistrates, or other persons in authority, the deliberation and sanction of a committee will give them their due weight.

On these grounds we would strongly advise any lady, who is disposed to enter upon the important work of visiting a prison, to look round, in the first instance, for persons who may unite with her in its prosecution ; and our experience leads us to believe that there are few, if any, prisons in the kingdom, in the neighbourhood of which some benevolent ladies may not be found, who will be both able and willing to engage in this interesting task. When ladies have thus united for the purpose, it will of course be necessary, before they proceed to put their plan in execution, to obtain the sanction of the magistrates under whose authority the prison is placed. And here we would remark that, since persons of rank and influence in society are often able, from their peculiar

situation, to remove difficulties which might otherwise be insuperable, some lady in the neighbourhood, of this description, ought to be invited to act as patroness or president of the committee. Much advantage will also arise from a regular yearly correspondence with the committee of the British Society in London.

The following Resolutions are recommended by that Society, as proper to be adopted by Local Associations:—

- I. THAT we form ourselves into an Association, in connection with "The Ladies' British Society," for the purpose of promoting the reformation of Female Prisoners in the Gaols of this Town (*or City*) and its immediate vicinity, and that it be denominated "The —— Prison Association."
- II. That the concerns of this Association shall be conducted by a Committee, consisting of a Treasurer, Secretary, and (if possible) not less than twelve other Members.
- III. That the Committee meet monthly, on some day to be fixed by themselves; and that three Members be competent to transact business.
- IV. That one or (if possible) two ladies be appointed to visit each day; every lady being expected to be in attendance one morning of the week; and that

28 FORMATION OF COMMITTEES.

a class-book be provided, in which the visitors are to notice the conduct of the women, as a guide in the distribution of prizes.

- V. That in case of the necessary absence of a Lady on her visiting day, she shall always find a substitute to attend the prison for her.
- VI. That a code of rules for the regulation of the conduct of the prisoners be hung in every ward of the prison, and read to the women once a week.
- VII. That the Committee endeavour to obtain the countenance of the Chaplains to their proceedings, and that they carefully avoid the introduction of sectarian books and tenets among the prisoners.
- VIII. That a Sub-Committee be annually appointed to prepare a Report to the Ladies' British Society, which Report shall specify—
 1. Whether on application to the Magistrates, and other local authorities (*which ought to be the first step in forming an Association*) they have countenanced the plan, and kindly afforded their aid and protection.
 2. The number of Members composing the Association.
 3. Whether a Matron be appointed.
 4. The nature of the employment provided for the women, and the mode of disposing of the work, and appropriating its produce.
 5. The average number of females confined.
 6. The particulars of any school, or other means of instruction for the prisoners or their children.
 7. Any facts of an interesting nature arising out of the proceedings of the Association, especially any real improvement.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE METHOD OF PROCEEDING IN A PRISON,
AFTER THE FORMATION OF A VISITING COMMITTEE, AND ON
THE PROPER DEPORTMENT OF THE VISITORS.

WHEN a Ladies' Association for visiting any particular prison has been formed, and when the sanction of the Magistrates has been obtained for their undertaking, the Committee (consisting probably of but a few, and those judicious, individuals) will of course take an early opportunity of meeting in the females' department of the prison. They will then call the prisoners together, and explain to them their motives and views in undertaking to assist and superintend them. They will express their sympathy with them under their afflicting circumstances, soothe them with words of gentleness and kindness, and endeavour to hold up, in strong colours, the danger and misery of vice, the beauty of holiness, and the innumerable advantages

30 PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

which attach to a life of sobriety, industry, honesty, and virtue. When the attention of the prisoners has been thus engaged, and their better feelings excited, it will be necessary to propose a series of rules for their future conduct. To these rules they may be expected, in the first place, to give their deliberate and voluntary assent; and secondly, to consider themselves firmly bound to adhere to them, during their continuance in prison. Experience has amply proved, that when prisoners are tenderly treated, there is a general willingness to submit to such regulations as the ladies who visit them may propose for their conduct and improvement.

The following rules, which were unanimously adopted in the prison of Newgate, when the Association of Visitors was formed, for the benefit of its female inmates, will afford some notion of the general system pursued by the visitors, and of the conduct enjoined on the objects of their care.

RULES

FOR REGULATING THE CONDUCT OF THE FEMALE
PRISONERS IN NEWGATE.

- I. THE Matron, on behalf of "The Association for the Improvement of the Female Prisoners in Newgate," has the general superintendence of them, both with respect to their conduct and the various kinds of work procured for them, of which she is required to keep an exact account.
- II. The women being divided into classes, a monitor, chosen from among the most orderly, is intrusted with the particular oversight of each class; and each woman is required to wear constantly a ticket, denoting the class to which she belongs, and her place therein.
- III. One of the most suitable for the office is appointed as keeper of the Women's Yard, to prevent any disorder there, to inform her fellow-prisoners, in a proper manner, when their friends come to visit them, and to take care that they do not spend any time at the grating (the place where their friends meet them), except whilst with their friends.
- IV. No begging is allowed. If money should be offered to the women by any of those who regularly visit the prison, they are to decline accepting it; but they may, in a respectful manner, direct to the box placed between the gates for receiving donations, which, at a suitable time, are divided amongst them.

32 RULES FOR THE PRISONERS.

- V. They are enjoined carefully to guard against every thing that is likely to occasion quarrelling or disagreement; not upbraiding one another on account of any previous conduct or circumstances; but rather, by a peaceable and orderly demeanour, endeavouring to promote each other's comfort and improvement.
- VI. Swearing, or in any manner taking the Sacred Name * "in vain,"—all bad words, immoral conversation, and indecent behaviour, are to be especially avoided.
- VII. Card-playing, and all other gaming; as also plays, novels, and other pernicious books, with all immoral songs, are strictly prohibited.
- VIII. The women are required to attend in the work-room every forenoon (except when the chapel is open for them), and occasionally in the evening, to hear a portion of the Holy Scriptures †: for which purpose, on the first ringing of the bell, ten minutes before the reading commences, the monitors are to collect them in their respective wards, that all may be ready at the second ringing, when they are to proceed in regular order (each monitor conducting her class) to take their seats, in silence; retiring afterwards with the same quietness and regularity.
- IX. Cleanliness, both in their persons and apartments, is particularly required of all the women; also that

* See Exod. xx. 7, and 2 Tim. ii. 19.

† See 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

they be careful to avoid increasing each other's difficulties in this respect. And the pledging of any article of apparel is strictly forbidden.

- X. The monitors are expected not only to take charge of their own particular classes, but also, as they have opportunity, to extend a watchful care over all their fellow-prisoners. And they are required (besides applying to the matron whenever her interference may appear necessary) to make a regular and faithful report to the visitors in attendance, whether or not these rules have been duly observed.
- XI. If a monitor transgress any of the rules, she is to be dismissed from her office, and one more orderly selected to take her place.
- XII. Any woman who may consider herself ill-treated by a monitor has full liberty, in a civil, quiet manner, to represent her case to a visitor, or the matron: but any refractory or unbecoming behaviour towards a monitor, who is properly exercising her office, must be accounted a serious offence.

For the encouragement of the women in endeavouring to conduct themselves well, the Association distribute, several times in the year, to all those who prove deserving, some useful article, as a reward.

The great object which the visitors ought always to keep in view is, the *reformation* of the prisoners: and to this principal end all

their plans must be subservient. In endeavouring to effect this good purpose, it will of course devolve upon them to instruct the unlettered in useful elementary knowledge, to bring all to a practical acquaintance with Holy Writ, and to train these unhappy criminals to habits of cleanliness, order, and regular industry. These several objects must be pursued according to local circumstances ; and judicious visitors will seldom be at a loss respecting the proper application of their efforts in order to obtain the results which may be desired. We wish however, to take the opportunity afforded us, by the present section, of throwing out a few hints respecting the *general deportment* desirable in the visitors themselves, both towards the prisoners and towards those persons under whose authority and superintending care the prison is placed.

Much depends on the spirit in which the visitor enters upon her work. It must be the spirit, not of judgment, but of mercy. She must not say in her heart, *I am more holy than thou* ; but must rather keep in perpetual remembrance, that “ *all* have

sinned, and come short of the glory of God" —that, therefore, great pity is due from us, even to the greatest transgressors among our fellow-creatures—and that, in meekness and love, we ought to labour for their restoration. The *good principle* in the hearts of many abandoned persons may be compared to the few remaining sparks of a nearly extinguished fire. By means of the utmost care and attention, united with the most gentle treatment, these may yet be fanned into a flame, but, under the operation of a rough and violent hand, they will presently disappear, and may be lost for ever.

In our conduct towards these unfortunate females, kindness, gentleness, and true humility, ought ever to be united with serenity and *firmness*. Nor will it be safe ever to descend, in our intercourse with them, to familiarity ; for there is a dignity in the Christian character, which demands, and will obtain, respect, and which is powerful in its influence, even over dissolute minds.

None need be discouraged from expressing amongst them, a detestation and abhorrence of sin, and a strong view of its dread-

ful consequences. Nevertheless, it is seldom salutary to make a pointed application of such remarks to the cases of individual criminals ; for experience proves, that if those persons who visit them are harsh in judging and condemning them, the effect is hurtful rather than beneficial. Neither is it by any means wise, to converse with them on the subject of the crimes of which they are accused or convicted ; for such conversation is injurious both to the criminals themselves and to others who hear them ; and, moreover, it frequently leads them to add sin to sin, by uttering the grossest falsehoods.

The visiting ladies must show as much confidence in the prisoners as circumstances will possibly admit ; and, in order to this end, it will be at once salutary and safe to intrust them with the care of various articles belonging to the Committee. Marks of approbation and small rewards ought, also, at times, to be bestowed on them, as an encouragement to good conduct. To miss these rewards is generally found to be a sufficient mortification for the correction of the disorderly. Solitary confinement, which is useful

in extreme cases, is, in our opinion, a punishment far too severe to be resorted to on any light and trivial occasion.

Finally, those who engage in the interesting task of visiting criminals must not be impatient if they find the work of reformation a very slow one. Such it will almost necessarily be in the generality of cases. Sensible of the natural corruption of our own hearts, let us learn patiently to bear with the hardened and the profligate, and let us be *faithful* and *diligent* in directing their attention to "*the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world:*" for it is only by faith in *Him*, that these poor wanderers can obtain the forgiveness of their past sins, or be enabled, for the future, to lead a life of true piety and virtue.

The Members of the Visiting Committee ought ever to be careful to adhere precisely to the rules of the prison, and to the directions of the magistrates. Interference with these gentlemen, or with any of the officers of the prison (except those whom the magistrates may have placed under their care),

must be strictly avoided : yet it ought to be the constant endeavour of the visitors to *aid* the efforts of those persons in authority, who have the welfare of the Institution at heart. And many such persons are happily found among our magistrates, in the present day.

Much disadvantage will generally accrue from endeavours on the part of the visiting Ladies to procure the mitigation of the sentences of criminals. Such endeavours ought never to be made, except when the cases are remarkably clear ; and then through the regular official channels. Deeply as we must deplore the baneful effects of the punishment of death, and painful as we must feel it to be, that our fellow-creatures, in whose welfare we are interested, should be prematurely plunged into an awful eternity ; yet, while our laws continue as they are, unless they can bring forward *decided facts* in favour of the condemned, it is wiser for the visiting Ladies to be quiet, and submit to decrees, which they cannot alter.

Having thus adverted to several particulars, which require the attention of all persons who enter upon this interesting engage-

ment, we will conclude this chapter with the expression of a desire, that they may be at once *wise as serpents, and harmless as doves*; and that Christian love and peace may influence their whole conduct towards the objects of their care. Then they may entertain a strong confidence *that their labour will not be in vain in the Lord!*

CHAPTER III.

ON FEMALE OFFICERS IN PRISONS.

IT is absolutely essential to the proper order and regulation of every prison, that the female prisoners should be placed under the superintendence of officers of their own sex.

Women confined in our prisons are, for the most part, persons of light and abandoned character. To place them under the care of *men* is evidently unreasonable, and seldom fails to be injurious to both parties. Male turnkeys ought never, in our opinion, to have access to the female department of the prison, or to hold any personal communication with its inmates, except in the presence of a matron or her assistants. In visiting small prisons, Mrs. Fry has frequently observed one or two unfortunate young women—committed, perhaps, for some minor offence (such as running away from an ap-

prenticeship, or purloining a teaspoon),—placed under the sole care of a man, whose key will at any time unlock their door, and afford him admission to their society. This we cannot but consider a most unwarrantable and deplorable exposure.

One *matron* will be able to maintain far greater order amongst a number of female criminals than several male turnkeys. Her influence is less exciting, and is at once safer and more powerful. She may *always* continue in their company; may instruct them in their feminine duties; and, by a circumspect example, may prove to these poor wanderers from the path of rectitude, the excellence of a modest, regular, and well-ordered, life. To such a person also the women under her care can freely communicate a knowledge of their circumstances, and pour forth their sorrows, as to a wise and sympathizing friend.

Since the passing of the late Act of Parliament, for the regulation of prisons, our large gaols have been generally provided with a matron and female turnkeys; but it is much to be regretted that in many smaller

prisons no such provisions have yet been adopted. Nor ought it to be concealed that the persons selected to fill the office of matron are, in various instances, unsuitable for their post; and in other cases, are unfitted for its fulfilment, by residing out of the prison. See 4 Geo. IV., cap. 64.*

A matron placed over female prisoners ought assuredly to be a resident, not only within the walls of the prison, but in the same part of it as are the objects of her care; and great caution is ever found to be necessary in the selection of so important an officer. She ought never to be chosen because the situation is suited to her wants, but only because she is suited to fill the situation. She ought to be a person of respectable, orderly, and active, habits,—plain in her dress,—gentle, yet firm, in her demeanour,—of sufficient education to enable

* Amongst the rules laid down for the management of prisons, in this admirable act, are the following :

SECOND.—*A matron shall be appointed, in every prison in which female prisoners shall be confined, who shall reside in the prison; and it shall be the duty of the matron constantly to superintend the female prisoners.*

SEVENTH.—*Female prisoners shall in all cases be attended by female officers, pp. 776, 777.*

her to superintend the instruction of the prisoners,—and although not *greatly* elevated above her charge, yet in a station of life so far superior to their own, as to command their respect and obedience. Vigilance, impartiality, and a willingness to submit to those persons under whose authority she is placed, ought to be distinguishing features in her character. Widows, from their superior knowledge of the world and of life, are generally preferable for this office, to single women. Above all, it is most desirable that persons appointed to fill so responsible a situation should be decidedly religious themselves, and heartily engaged in promoting the reformation and spiritual welfare of those whom they are called upon to govern.

Although much may be effected by a matron, in the care of female prisoners, it is evident that, in all our larger gaols, or houses of correction, subordinate officers of the same sex will also be required; and these officers, like the matron who governs them, ought to be selected with peculiar judgment and care. Let the female criminal in prison perceive, in *every* officer who exercises authority over

her, a consistent example of feminine propriety and virtue, and great will be its influence towards a happy change of habit and character *in herself*. May the time quickly arrive, when not a single female prisoner in this enlightened kingdom shall be found under the immediate superintendence of any persons whatsoever, except the sober and virtuous of her own sex !

CHAPTER IV.

ON SEPARATE PRISONS FOR FEMALES, AND ON INSPECTION AND CLASSIFICATION.

WHERE men and women are confined in the same building, as is at present so generally the case throughout the prisons of this kingdom, no means must be neglected to ensure the complete separation of the two sexes. But, as this good end is, under such circumstances, extremely liable to be defeated, it is greatly to be desired, that male and female prisoners should be placed in *separate buildings*, so as to render all communication between them *absolutely impossible*. The good effect which would result from such a measure can hardly be estimated by those who are not aware from experience in what a degree “evil communication corrupts good manners.” At the same time that an invincible barrier to all communication between sexes would greatly tend to order and

briety among the inmates of a prison, and as greatly facilitate the duties of the officers, it would add considerable weight and effect to the *punishment* of imprisonment.

In the castle of Lancaster,* where a new building has, within a few years, been erected for female prisoners, this object of absolute separation is in great measure secured—and much is it to be desired that, in every prison which may henceforth be built, so good an example may be carefully followed. Not only would such a plan be the most effectual for all the purposes of prison discipline, but it would lead to the saving of expense. Prisons for women do not require the same *strength* or *space* as those for men. Add to this, that the sums required for the remuneration of *female officers* would be comparatively small.

Now, on the supposition that a prison were to be erected in any populous district, for the exclusive purpose of the confinement of females, we would suggest that, in the plan of such a prison, and in the arrangement of its discipline, the two great objects

* See Appendix for Plan of the Prison for Females at Lancaster.

to be aimed at would be *inspection* and *classification*.

The apartments of the matron ought to be so arranged, in connexion with the cells, the day rooms, and the airing grounds, as to enable her to see all the prisoners while at work, and in their hours of recreation, and to *overhear them* during the night ; but, in case of the number of the prisoners being too large for the superintendence and inspection of an individual, the matron may in this respect obtain all the assistance she requires from her female turnkeys.

Whether, however, the object be effected by the sole care of the matron, or by her joint care with that of subordinate officers, *vigilant and unremitting inspection* is unquestionably one of the *most essential points* in a correct system of prison discipline. By this means alone can the evil of corrupt communication be prevented ; and the *certain and constant* check which is thus afforded on every vicious practice, among the criminals, is eminently calculated to produce in them (though it may be by slow degrees) *an effectual change of habit*.

With respect to classification, it is in the first place obvious, that a division must always be made of the *tried* from the *untried* prisoners; and both classes (but more especially the former) will require subdivision. In effecting this subdivision, we would propose that the tried prisoners should be classed not so much according to the nature of the offences of which they are convicted, as according to their general character and degree of criminality. When one of the oldest and most hardened of offenders is found guilty only of a misdemeanour, and a mere novice in crime is under sentence for the same offence, it is obviously very improper that two such persons should be classed in one company. It appears therefore very desirable, that, while the offences for which the prisoners have been convicted are, with other circumstances, *kept in view*, a discretionary power, as it regards classification, should be allowed to rest with the officers of the prison, under the advice and superintendence of the visiting Committee of Ladies: and the visitors may also be authorised to change *from time to time*, the classification of any

prisoner, in such a manner as may appear to be required by a corresponding *change in her conduct.*

However large the number of female convicts, in any prison, may be, we should consider it quite needless to divide them into more than four classes; and these classes must be formed according to character and conduct.

In the first, or highest class, ought to be placed women, whose crimes are of no deep moral dye, and whose demeanour and conduct in the prison are comparatively exemplary. This class may enjoy, in a variety of respects, peculiar advantages. Their clothing, for example, may be somewhat better, and their labour lighter and less irksome, than those of the lower classes. Some pecuniary profit may be attached to their employment, and the most orderly individuals in the class may be introduced to offices of trust; and thus the number of hired officers in the prison may be gradually diminished. It is wonderful how much confidence may safely be placed in the better sort of cri-

minals, when, by the influence of Christian kindness, a good spirit has once been infused into their minds.

In the second class, the privileges allowed to the prisoners must, of course, be somewhat less; and, in the third class, must be yet more considerably diminished.

The last, and lowest, class ought to consist of the most hardened and desperate offenders, and of those persons who have been committed to the prison more than once. This class must undergo its *peculiar privations and hardships*. At the same time, since hope is essentially necessary to reformation, those who compose even this most degraded of the classes ought—with great care and deliberation—to be raised step by step into the higher classes, when their conduct merits it. Such a system of gradual promotion will be found to operate on the whole body of the prisoners as a very powerful stimulus to improvement.

Among the untried, we question whether any subdivision is necessary beyond the separation of modest women from prostitutes.

There are many obvious reasons why persons of these two descriptions should never be classed in one company.

Now, although the provisions which we have ventured to recommend for the inspection and classification of prisoners are extremely desirable, we are not to forget the lamentable fact, that a large proportion of our prisons are at present entirely destitute of the suggested advantages. In too many of them no separation is effected, except between the sexes, or perhaps also between the tried and untried. In such cases much advantage will be found to arise, notwithstanding the want of separation, from a subdivision of the prisoners into classes—each class being placed under the care of a monitor, whose duty it will be to render either to the matron or to a visitor, a daily account of their conduct. Every individual in the several classes may wear a ticket inscribed with a number by which she shall be distinguished, and which shall agree with a corresponding number in the class list.* That list must be kept by the matron or the visi-

* For specimen of Class List see Appendix.

tors, and must contain a register of the conduct of every prisoner, formed by marks of approbation or disapprobation, placed on parallel lines against their respective numbers. The regular keeping of such a register will be found a useful check on every kind of improper conduct, and will form the foundation of a judicious application of rewards to the most deserving prisoners.

It is indeed worthy of remark that, even in the best arranged prisons, and more especially in convict-ships, the plan of *numbering* the prisoners will never fail to be advantageous. If, for instance, a woman, in any particular class, is distinguished by a certain number, this number must not only be found in the class-list connected with a register of her conduct, but must be inscribed on all the principal articles which belong to her—especially her seat at table, her clothing, her bed and bedding, and her books. Such a system is found by experience to be very effectual in preventing disputes and in promoting that strictness of discipline which is essential to the order and regularity of the whole machine.

In the preceding remarks on the subject of classification, we have not mentioned *a sick ward*. This is a provision of obvious importance ; and it is almost needless to observe that the inmates of such a ward ought not only to be placed, like the other prisoners, under the inspection of the matron, but have strong *peculiar* claims on her kind and constant attention.

CHAPTER V.

ON INSTRUCTION.

AMONG the various objects to which the Visiting Committee of Ladies will find it, in any prison, their place to attend, the instruction of the prisoners may be considered the most interesting and important. It is a melancholy reflection, that so large a proportion of the inhabitants of this country—a country possessed of so many advantages, and so greatly advanced in civilization—are still left in a condition of almost extreme ignorance.

This observation applies with peculiar force to those who are in the habit of breaking its laws. Of the female criminals who come under the care of the Newgate Committee, about one third are unable to read at all—and another third can only read a very little. With regard to the truths of religion, the ignorance which prevails amongst them

is extreme; and this is the natural consequence of the disadvantages under which they have been brought up: for many of them have scarcely ever attended a place of public worship, or heard, or read, any part of the Holy Scriptures. Much, therefore, must depend on the instruction which such persons receive *in prison*.*

In the first place, they will there have the advantage of a regular attendance of their appointed place of worship—for our prisons are now almost universally provided with a chapel and a chaplain; and this opportunity will, in most cases, be afforded them more than once in the week. When assembled in the chapel, it is indispensable that the women should be completely separated from the men, and quite out of their sight. Nothing must be allowed to divert their attention, or to interrupt the solemnity of the occasion.

The chaplain of a prison will, of course, find it his duty not only to perform the ser-

* Since the year 1821, the following account has been kept of the women who have been confined in Newgate.

Educated in National Schools	5
Lancasterian ditto	0
Sunday ditto	8

A very small number indeed, out of so many hundred women!

vices of public worship, but to communicate with the prisoners individually, and to endeavour, by private persuasion and instruction, to lead them into the paths of virtue, religion, and peace. Greatly is it to be desired, that those who occupy this important station, should be themselves persons of true piety. We venture to suggest that they ought to be married men of *established* character, with some knowledge of life, as well as religious experience.

Much as the good order of every prison depends on the conduct and character of the chaplain, and desirable as it is that he should fully and faithfully perform his duties, and that the Visiting Committee should not interfere with him, we well know that there is a part of the moral and religious instruction of female prisoners, which cannot be communicated to them so well, so safely, or so efficaciously, as by *the ladies who visit the prison*. The instruction to which we allude is all of a private nature; but, besides this, the assembling of the prisoners together, at least once every day, in order to read to them a portion of the Holy Scripture, is a charge

which will most suitably devolve on the members of the Visiting Committee.

This duty is one of very serious importance. It ought never to be lightly performed as a mere matter of course; but, when we are engaged in it, our hearts ought ever to be lifted up to Him who can alone bless our endeavours. The visitors will do well, generally, to select for the purpose the more clear and simple parts of Scripture, especially from the New Testament and the Psalms. Nor must they fail to direct the especial attention of their hearers to those passages which proclaim the salvation offered to lost mankind through a crucified Redeemer, and which are calculated to revive the buried hopes of even the very worst of sinners. The 25th and 51st Psalms, the 15th Chapter of Luke's Gospel, and the 12th of Hebrews, among other portions of Scripture, will be found peculiarly applicable to the case of these sinful and afflicted persons. To pursue a regular course of reading in the Scriptures—for example, to read through the whole New Testament, chapter by chapter—is indeed desirable where the prisoners

continue under the care of the Committee for long stated periods, as may often be the case in houses of correction. But in Newgate the changes which are perpetually taking place prevent the execution of any such plan.

Much good may be effected by instructing the female criminals *individually* in the truths of the Christian religion. For this purpose, every member of the Committee may have a certain number of them under her care. Judiciously selected tracts and other religious books may be lent to them for their perusal in hours of leisure; and they may be encouraged to commit to memory some of our best hymns—such as those in the Olney Collection—and various impressive passages of the Bible itself. The influence of this private religious instruction is powerful, and we have long observed that the greatest change for the better generally takes place in those prisoners, over whom has been exercised the most of this pious Christian care.

According to the provisions of the late Act of Parliament, prayers are to be read

daily in all our prisons. It is incumbent on the visitors to endeavour to impress upon the minds of the prisoners a sense of the seriousness of this sacred duty—to point out to them what a high privilege it is to hold communion with God—and to explain to them, that unless this service be performed with the heart and in spirit, it can never be a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing, to God. Some of these poor wanderers are so ignorant as to imagine that, if they do but hurry over a daily service of prayer with their lips, they are thereby justified in His sight; and that this superficial offering will atone for their daily transgressions. It cannot be too strongly impressed upon them, that true religion and saving faith are in their nature *practical*, and that the reality of repentance can be proved only by good works and by an amendment in life and conversation. It is, however, a great consolation to know, that the simple declaration of the Gospel has a powerful *tendency* to produce these effects—and actually produces them, at times, even in the most hardened offenders. And although, in some cases, such persons, when

again beset with temptation—and great are the trials to which they are exposed—fall under the power of it, yet there are many others, in whom the effects of Christian instruction, given to them when in prison, are not only powerful, but *durable*. Long observation and experience enable us to say that there are few engagements from which the pious and benevolent may derive more encouragement than the care and religious instruction of poor criminals. And surely such efforts as these highly become the followers of Him, who came into the world “to save sinners”—“to seek and to save that which was LOST.”

Some part of the time of the visitors may be very usefully employed in the elementary instruction of the more ignorant prisoners. They ought to be taught to read, write, and cipher, as well as to make a ready and profitable use of the needle. The prisoners ought also to be supplied with a small assortment of unexceptionable books, not only of a religious, but of a generally instructive, nature; as it is most desirable to turn the channel of their thoughts, to improve not

only their habits, but their *tastes*, and, by every possible means, to raise their *intellectual* and *moral*, as well as their *religious*, standard.*

We strongly recommend the plan of mutual instruction, as practised in the schools of Bell and Lancaster. Let the women of the first class be employed (under the superintendence of the matron or the visitors) in teaching the lower classes; and let them receive some remuneration, to encourage them in their work.

One observation only remains for us to make, under the head of Instruction—viz. that, in all our religious communications

* *List of books circulated among the female prisoners in Newgate.*

A set of books printed in Dublin, by the Kildare Street Society, consisting of forty-eight small volumes, the subjects are various, and calculated to afford innocent amusement, as well as information.

A careful selection of religious tracts, bound up in several small volumes.

Hannah More's Tracts in 3 octavo volumes.

Trimmer's Help to the Unlearned in the Study of the Scriptures, 2 vols.

Pilgrim's Progress.

The Bible its own witness.

The Servant's Friend.

Lessons for young persons in humble life.

Scripture Help.

Serious Reflections on Time and Eternity.

Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion.

with the prisoners, every thing sectarian must ever be rigidly avoided, and the attention of our afflicted hearers exclusively directed to the *essential and saving principles of our common Christianity.*

CHAPTER VI.

ON EMPLOYMENT.

OBJECTIONS have, by some persons, been made to the employment of prisoners, on the ground that it may be the means of depriving some of the industrious poor of the means of an honest and respectable maintenance.

It is to be hoped, however, that such objections will, ere long, cease to be urged; for it is abundantly evident, that unless the time of these poor females, who have abandoned themselves to idleness and vice, be fully occupied while they are in prison, there can be little or no hope that their confinement will lead to their reformation. Without this important aid to the work of prison discipline, their attention will still be directed to the criminal objects which have previously occupied them, and much of their time will probably be spent in contriving plans for future evil. We cannot promote the re-

formation of such persons more effectually than by making them experimentally acquainted with the sweets of industry.

Since, then, the happiness and security of the community at large very much depend on the diminution of crime, and since the reformation of criminals is one important means of producing such diminution, it is evident that the benefit which society derives from the employment of criminals greatly outweighs the inconvenience which can possibly arise to the mass of our labouring population, from the small proportion of work done in our prisons. When, to this consideration is added that of the moral welfare of the prisoners themselves (which regular occupation is so greatly calculated to promote), we can no longer entertain any doubts respecting the importance and propriety of this branch of prison discipline. It is desirable, however, that every Visiting Committee, in the choice of work for the prisoners under their care, should keep the industrious poor constantly in view, and should as far as possible, contrive such methods for the employment of their charge as will the

least interfere with the usual occupation of the labouring classes.

No prison can be considered complete, which does not afford the means of *hard labour*, which properly appertains to a reforming *discipline*, and forms an important part of the system of *punishment*. The tread-wheel, and the hand-wheel or crank-mill—(which, in some instances is preferable) may, in this point of view, be found useful for the refractory and depraved, even among female prisoners; but this is a discipline which ought to be applied to *women*, only under very watchful care and with *strict limitations*; for the female character is seldom improved by such rough and laborious occupation. We should hope that none need be thus engaged for more than a short time. As soon as the women are prepared for entering into the higher classes, they ought to be furnished with such employments only as will fit them for the duties of domestic life, and will enable them honestly to maintain themselves, after their liberation.

Plain needle-work, knitting, washing and ironing, house-work, cooking, spinning, and

weaving, may all be applied to the uses of every large prison; and will form very desirable and sufficient occupation for the generality of female prisoners. Although in all cases, their employments ought to be *constant*, yet, the higher the class of any criminal, the lighter and more comfortable ought to be her labour.

Formerly, *patchwork* occupied much of the time of the women confined in Newgate, as it still does that of the female convicts on the voyage to New South Wales. It is an unexceptionable mode of employing female prisoners, if no other work can be procured, and is useful as a means of teaching them the art of sewing. The female prisoners in Newgate are now, for the most part, occupied either in knitting stockings for the Foundling Institution, or in making clothes for the poor, which many ladies are in the habit of purchasing and distributing gratuitously among their distressed neighbours. It is quite surprising how great a quantity of work these poor criminals complete in the course of a year, and with what entire safety they may themselves be entrusted with the

care of the materials, as well as of the articles when ready for sale.

The female inmates of our prisons may sometimes procure work on their own account ; but, even when they are employed solely on account of the Institution, they ought to partake of the fruit of their labour. Some remuneration for their work, even during their continuance in confinement, will be found to act as a powerful stimulus to a steady and persevering industry. The greater proportion, however, of their allotted share of earnings must be reserved for them against the time of their leaving prison and returning to the world. The possession of a moderate sum of money will *then* be found of essential importance, as the means of preventing an almost irresistible temptation—the temptation of want and misery—to a renewal of criminal practices. And if in labouring for this remuneration, the poor criminal has also gained possession of the *habit of industry*, and has learned to appreciate the sweets of regular employment, it is more than probable that this temptation may never occur again !

CHAPTER VII.

ON MEDICAL ATTENDANCE, DIET, CLOTHING AND BEDDING, AND FIRING.

THE directions of the late Act of Parliament, on the subject of medical attendance, are so admirably calculated to meet the necessities of the prisons to which they are intended to apply, that it is quite needless for us to expatiate on the subject. We need only refer to the provisions of the Act, as stated below.*

* See 4 Geo. IV. chap. 64, sec. 33. "Every such surgeon shall, and is hereby required to, visit every prison to which he shall be so appointed, twice at least in every week, and oftener if necessary, and to see every prisoner confined therein, whether criminal or debtor, and to report to every general or quarter sessions the condition of the prison, and the state of health of the prisoners under his care"—"He shall further keep a journal, in which he shall enter the date of every attendance in the performance of his duty, with any observations which may occur to him in the execution thereof, and shall sign the same with his name; and such journal shall be kept in the prison, but shall regularly be laid before the justices for their inspection at every quarter sessions, and shall be signed by the chairman of the sessions, in proof of the same having been there produced."

Sec. 10, Rule 13. "Prisoners under the care of the surgeon shall be allowed such diet as he may direct."

Sec. 10, Rule 17. "The surgeon shall examine every prisoner

Since, however, these salutary provisions do not extend to such of our prisons as belong to cities and boroughs under exclusive local jurisprudence, it may not be improper to impress upon those who have authority over such prisons, or who are in the habit of visiting them, the importance of *early* medi-

who is brought into the prison, before he or she shall be passed into the proper ward: and no prisoner shall be discharged from prison if labouring under any acute or dangerous distemper; nor until, in the opinion of the surgeon, such discharge is safe; unless such prisoner shall require to be discharged.

“ The surgeon shall attend immediately on notice from the keeper that any prisoner is ill.

“ He shall visit the patients in the infirmary at the least once every day, and shall twice in the week see every person confined in the prison, and give such directions as he may think necessary for the preservation of the health of the prisoners, and the cleanliness and proper condition of the gaol. He shall inquire into the mental as well as bodily state of every prisoner: and when he shall have reason to believe that the mind or body is materially affected by the discipline, treatment, or diet, particularly of such as are in solitary confinement, he shall inform the keeper thereof, and enter his observations and directions in his journal, which shall be authority to the keeper for altering the discipline, treatment, or diet, of any prisoner, until the next visit of a visiting justice, who shall inquire into the case and make orders accordingly.

“ In case of the discovery of any infectious disorder, he shall direct the prisoner so infected to be kept separate from the other prisoners confined in the prison, until such time as all danger of contagion shall have ceased.

“ He shall at every court of assize, and also at every quarter sessions, affix, to the calendar of the prisoners printed and circulated, a certificate of the state of the health of the prisoners, to which he shall add his signature.”

cal care in cases of sickness among the prisoners. Experience amply proves that this may not only be useful to the individuals who are suffering from illness, but may often be the means of preventing contagion, and of promoting, therefore, the general health of the inmates of the prison.

When nurses are required for sick-women, it is very desirable to select them from among their fellow-prisoners ; some of whom will mostly be found capable of fulfilling the office, and steady enough to perform it faithfully, *under the superintendence of the matron.*

We are very sensible that the diet, clothing, bedding, and firing, provided for the inmates of our prisons, are not, and cannot be expected to be, under the controul of any visiting committee of ladies ; but, since the visitors will often find opportunities of exerting a quiet and gentle, yet effective, influence respecting matters of this description, we may venture to make a few observations on these branches of our subject.

The general principle which ought to be steadily kept in view, with regard to all such

points, is this—that, on the one hand, indulgence is to be avoided, except when merited by good conduct, and, on the other, that it is our duty to supply our prisoners with such food, clothing, bedding, and firing, as will be sufficient to maintain them in health, and prevent their being exposed to sufferings, the infliction of which the law of the land has never contemplated.

First, with respect to *food*. As the mode of diet varies among the lower orders in different parts of the country, so it may, with propriety, vary in our prisons. The prison allowance however ought in all cases to be enough for the healthy support of the prisoners; and in order to this end, it will be found necessary to provide an extra quantity of food for such of them as are engaged in hard labour and *especially on the tread-wheel*. In visiting some gaols, we have found too much reason to believe that the health of the poor criminals has materially suffered from the want of adequate support, while they have been compelled to use great bodily exertion.

When the prison allowance is ample for

the maintenance of health, it may be questioned whether tried prisoners ought to be permitted, except in some peculiar cases, to receive from their friends any farther supplies of food; for, in the management of prisons, a wholesome and judicious discipline, *of a restrictive nature*, ought always to be kept in view. Malt liquor is best excluded from a prison, except when rendered necessary by close confinement or hard labour. Wine and spirits must of course be entirely forbidden, except when used *medicinally*.

Although it is highly necessary, in the arrangement of the diet of prisoners, to avoid all capricious indulgence, yet a little relaxation of the strict line of discipline, in this respect may be very suitably allowed, when *merited by industry and good conduct*. Thus, when the women apply themselves diligently to the work provided by their visitors, and receive a part of their earnings as a remuneration, it will mostly be found right and *useful* to permit them to expend some of their little income in harmless articles of food, and especially in tea and sugar. And as their dealing with per-

sons out of prison frequently produces undesirable communications, it will be found an excellent plan to form a little shop in the prison, under the inspection of the Visiting Committee, where such articles may be purchased at a fair market price. This plan has been adopted at Newgate, and, after the trial of several years, is still found very useful.

Such part of the food of the prisoners as may require cooking ought to be prepared in some place appointed for the purpose, and by female prisoners suited to the office, and properly inspected.*

* On the article of Food. See 4 Geo. IV. chap. 64. sec. 10, Rule 13.
" Every prisoner maintained at the expense of any county, riding, division, city, town, or place, shall be allowed a sufficient quantity of plain and wholesome food, to be regulated by the justices in general or quarter sessions assembled. Regard being had (so far as may relate to convicted prisoners) to the *nature* of the labour required from, or performed by, such prisoners, so that the allowance of food may be duly apportioned thereto. And it shall be lawful for the justices to order for such prisoners of every description as are not able to work, or being able cannot procure employment sufficient to sustain themselves by their industry, or who may not be otherwise provided for, such allowance of food as the said justices shall from time to time think necessary for the support of health. Prisoners under the care of the surgeon shall be allowed such diet as he may direct. Care shall be taken that all the provisions supplied to the prisoners be of proper quantity and weight. Scales and legal weights and measures shall be provided, open to the use of any prisoners under such restrictions as shall be made by the regulations of each prison."

The regulations enforced by the late Prison Act, relative to the clothing and bedding of prisoners, will be found very useful and comprehensive. They are stated below,* and little need be said in addition to them. We may however observe, that iron bedsteads are preferable to wooden ones, as they will not harbour vermin ; and that the bedding allowed the prisoners, which, without undue indulgence, ought assuredly to be suf-

* See 4 Geo. IV. chap. 64. sec. 10. Rule 17. "The wearing apparel of every prisoner shall be fumigated and purified, if requisite, after which the same shall be returned to him or her, or in case of the insufficiency of such clothing, then other sufficient clothing shall be furnished, according to the rules and regulations of the prison ; but no prisoner before trial shall be compelled to wear a prison dress, unless his or her own clothes be deemed insufficient or improper, or necessary to be preserved for the purposes of justice : and no prisoner who has not been convicted of felony shall be liable to be clothed in a party-coloured dress, but if it be deemed expedient to have a prison dress for prisoners not convicted of felony, the same shall be plain--clean shirts and shifts shall be allowed to prisoners once a week, and clean sheets once a month."

Rule 18. "Every prisoner shall be provided with suitable bedding, and every male prisoner with a separate bed, hammock, or cot, either in a separate cell, or in a cell with not less than two other male prisoners.

"The bedding of the prison shall be frequently hung up in the air. The straw in the mattresses shall be changed as often as the keeper or surgeon may think proper, but in no case is to be allowed to continue in use beyond one month. The blankets and coverlets to be washed every three months, and in all cases clean bedding to be provided for every new prisoner."

ficient to keep them warm during the night, may, like the allowance of food, be in some degree regulated by the habits prevailing among the labouring poor in the district.

A regular prison dress for the tried prisoners, female as well as male, will be found an important aid to the purposes of prison discipline. It ought to be perfectly plain and simple, in some way distinguished from their usual apparel, and in the case of women, of such material as may be easily washed. Advantage will also arise from distinguishing the respective classes from each other, by some variety in the prison-dress—the dress of the prisoners in *each class* being of course a *uniform*.

Ear-rings, curled hair, and all sorts of finery and superfluity of dress, in tried female prisoners, must be absolutely forbidden ; and the caps worn by them should be close, plain, and not of a transparent material. Some variety in the texture of the cap may be a suitable method of distinguishing the different classes.

If the long hair of female felons were cut

off after their conviction, and afterwards kept quite short during their terms of imprisonment, it would be found to act as a certain yet harmless punishment; and would promote that humiliation of spirit, which, in persons so circumstanced, is one indispensable step to improvement and reformation.

A proper allowance of *firing*, although omitted, at present, in many of our prisons, appears to us to be, during the winter months, quite indispensable. It is lamentable to observe, that in some prisons there is not, in the criminals' wards, even a stove in which firing can be placed; and where a stove is found, there it often happens that fuel is wanting. Thus, during inclement weather, diseases are sometimes contracted, which can never afterwards be removed. We believe it has sometimes happened that persons committed to prison for trial have left the place of their confinement, *acquitted of crime*, and yet, *crippled for life*. Such things are altogether at variance with justice, and with that humane attention which has of late been bestowed on our prisons;

and it is greatly to be hoped, that the regular allowance of firing will soon become as general in them as that of clothing, bedding, and food.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE ATTENTION REQUIRED BY FEMALE CRIMINALS ON THEIR LEAVING PRISON.

AMONG the female convicts in our prisons, a considerable proportion have received sentence of transportation, and are in due time transferred from the prison to the convict-ship which is destined to convey them to New South Wales. Several humane regulations have lately been made by Government respecting female transports. They are, under these regulations, allowed to take out with them any of their children who are under the age of seven years; and a mother who has an infant at the breast is not compelled to leave England until her child is of a proper age to be weaned. Again, when female transports are removed from their prison to their convict-ship, they are not to be laden with heavy irons for their journey; and since this rule is often infringed, it is desirable that the ladies of the committee should be vigilant on the subject, and should

represent all such cases first to the governor of the prison, and afterwards, if needful, to the visiting magistrates. Government, or the cities and counties from which the female transports come, provide them with clothing, and the Committee of the Ladies' British Society are accustomed * to supply

* Each woman transported is provided by the British Society of Ladies with the following articles :

- One Bible.
- One hessian apron.
- One black stuff ditto.
- One black cotton cap.
- One large hessian bag (to keep her clothes in).
- One small ditto containing :
 - One piece of tape.
 - One oz. of pins.
 - One hundred needles.
 - Four balls of white sewing cotton.
 - One ditto black.
 - One ditto blue.
 - One ditto red.
 - Two balls of black worsted half an oz. each.
 - Twenty-four hanks of coloured thread.
 - One of cloth with eight darning needles, one small bodkin fastened on it.
 - Two stay laces.
 - One thimble.
 - One pair of scissars.
 - One pair of spectacles, when required.
 - Two pounds of patch-work pieces.
 - One comb.
 - One small ditto.
 - Knife and fork to each mess.
 - Ball of string to ditto.

them with a variety of articles, intended to afford them, during their voyage, some little accommodations, and the means of useful and profitable occupation. Much pains have also been taken by those members of the committee to whom the care of the women in convict-ships has been delegated, to impress upon them the necessity of continued good conduct, both for their temporal and spiritual welfare, and to arrange such a system among them as will ensure the maintenance of a salutary order and discipline on their passage to New South Wales. It generally happens that such of the female transports as obtain, from the surgeon of the vessel, a certificate of their orderly behaviour while under his care, are, on their arrival at their place of destination, immediately hired as servants by the most respectable families in the colony ; and very encouraging accounts have been received from New South Wales of the manner in which many of these females continue to do credit to the care of the British Society.

The females who quit our prisons as liberated persons are *peculiarly proper objects*

for the persevering care, and kind attention, of the ladies on visiting committees. Such persons are, for the most part, exposed to a variety of temptations. It is often their lot to struggle with much poverty and distress, with the force of habit, and with the insinuations and persuasions of their old companions in crime. Distrusted by the virtuous and respectable, and ridiculed by the vicious and dissolute, the liberated female criminal must have indeed received strong impressions from the instruction bestowed upon her in prison, if she is enabled to encounter all these difficulties, and to persevere in her newly-formed habits of morality and industry. The vigilance therefore of, perhaps, her *only* friends—we mean the members of the Visiting Committee—is evidently needful, in order to protect her from the influence of her old associates, and to introduce her, if possible, to some safe and respectable situation.*

* If situations cannot be at once procured for these destitute females, it will be found extremely useful to take them into a place of temporary refuge, where the care of the Committee may continue to be exerted over them, and the great work of reformation go forward until circumstances may open the way for their permanent settlement.—E. F.

Such a vigilance has, in various instances, been found very successful. Many poor women who have enjoyed, in our prisons, the benefit of moral and religious instruction, and who have since been the objects of the continued kind superintendence of the benevolent of their own sex, have succeeded in completely reestablishing their character, and are now occupying useful and respectable places in society.

It is to be hoped that, as Ladies' Committees for visiting prisons are extended throughout the kingdom, such pleasing instances of a valid reformation will become more and more numerous. And may it ever be remembered that, as nothing short of the blessing of the Almighty can possibly enable any of us to produce these good effects, so to *him alone belongs the praise of his own works!*

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

HAVING, in the preceding chapters, endeavoured to explain the method adopted by the British Ladies' Society in visiting and superintending female criminals in prison, we entertain a hope that, where visiting committees are still wanted, some of our own sex may be induced to consider the subject, and to make arrangements for assigning a portion of their time to this interesting and important object. Possibly also the simple account which has now been given of the views of those persons who have already engaged in the work, and of the principles on which they endeavour to conduct it, may be the means of removing the fears and doubts which the magistrates, in some parts of the country, still appear to entertain respecting the propriety of admitting the visits of women in the prisons under their care.

We venture once more to express our conviction that these gentlemen—like many others who have already warmly supported the introduction of female visitors—after a little experience of the plans now proposed, would find that they derive a most material assistance from Ladies' Committees, in the care of the female officers of the prison, as well as of the prisoners themselves; and that there are various details connected with the superintendence of such persons, for which, from their domestic knowledge and habits, and from some of the qualities characteristic of their sex, women are peculiarly, and indeed exclusively, adapted.

Where gaolers and other prison-officers are diligent in the performance of their duties, they are, for the most part, glad to avail themselves of such assistance; but, where the contrary is the case, it is very natural that they should oppose any plan which involves a daily, watchful, inspection of any part of the institution under their care. Thus are they induced, as far as they can to prejudice the minds of the gentlemen in authority over them, against the visits of

ladies to the female prisoners—a circumstance which has, we believe, prevented the formation of Ladies' Associations in some places where they were particularly needed, and where persons entirely suitable for the office would have been ready to engage in the work.

It is surely very desirable that magistrates should be on their guard against an undue influence of this description; for gentlemen who only occasionally walk through a prison—however praiseworthy their endeavours may be to promote a right discipline—are seldom fully aware of the evil which might be prevented, and of the good which might be effected, by that constant inspection and care, which, as far as the female department of the prison is concerned, would devolve on the members of a Ladies' Visiting Committee. A trial, at least, might without difficulty, be made of the effect of such a plan; and, in case of its being found productive of inconvenience or injury—a result which would contradict all our present experience—the visitors, at the desire of the magis-

trates, would, of course, without hesitation, withdraw from their field of labour.

The reader will, we trust, bear with a few more general remarks before we conclude.

Let not the interest manifested by so many of the benevolent in the present day, in behalf of those who have broken the laws of their country, lead any one to imagine, that such persons are not sensible of the danger and enormity of crime, or of the necessity of its being followed by punishment. Their desire is only that punishment should be of such a nature, that, while it deters others from the commission of crime by the force of example, it should also have a tendency—with as little variation as possible—to the reformation of the offenders themselves. They would not save convicted criminals from the necessary degree of present suffering—but they would have that suffering applied on the principles of a *wholesome discipline*, so as to be productive of future good, both to the criminals who are the subjects of it, and to society at large.

It is upon this, amongst other principles,

that persons who have carefully attended to the subject, and who have *personally watched* the effect of our criminal jurisprudence, both on offenders themselves and on the multitude by whom they are surrounded, so generally and so strongly unite in the sentiment, that the punishment of death—especially as it is applied to crimes against property only—is very injurious to the best interests of society.

It would be out of our province now to dwell on that well known general fact, that when punishment is unduly severe, it becomes in the same degree *uncertain*, and therefore, inoperative. If we would ensure the cordial cooperation of the public—especially of prosecutors, witnesses, and jury-men,—in the punishment of crime, the provisions of our criminal code must be made *mild enough* to coincide with those unalterable principles of justice and humanity which God has implanted in the breast of man, and which will ever be supported by the feelings of a free and enlightened community.

Waving, for the present, this primary consideration, we can hardly forbear to observe,

that the *practical effects* of capital punishments are proved *by observation* to be, in various respects, very lamentable, as it relates both to the sufferers themselves, and to others who are exposed to those temptations which lead to the perpetration of crime.

First, with regard to the sufferers themselves, it is obvious that the infliction of death, although it may not preclude a previous repentance, cuts off the possibility of that amendment of life which can alone prove its reality ; nor will any one dispute that it is a most tremendous expedient, violently to transmit the soul of a fellow-creature—prepared or unprepared—from probation to *judgment*, from time to *eternity*. Some persons, we believe, imagine that the cutting off of all hope from the criminal, in this world, is a sure method of *driving* him into an effectual repentance, and a saving faith. But, while we may entertain a humble hope that, where the mercy of men is withheld, the mercy of God is yet near to save : those who are accustomed to visit our prisons cannot shut their eyes to the fact, that many criminals, when about to suffer

death, will cling, even to the last, to the hope of a reprieve ; and that many others, by their desire to dress themselves out finely for the last scene, by their pertinacious falsehoods, and even by the commission of actual crime—(though death is immediately impending over them)—afford too sure an evidence of a heart unconverted and estranged from God. Their evil habits are often known to maintain an almost undivided sway over them until the very hour of their execution ; and they pacify their conscience with the dangerous and most fallacious notion, that the violent death which awaits them will serve as a full atonement for their sins.

Long observation has also convinced us, that our public executions have a very injurious effect on the minds of others who are themselves in the way of breaking the laws of their country. The terror of the example is very generally rendered abortive by the predestinarian notion—vulgarly prevalent among thieves—that “ if they are to be hanged, they are to be hanged, and nothing can prevent it.” And, at the same time, the frequent public destruction of life has a

fearfully hardening effect on those whom it is intended to intimidate. While it excites in them the spirit of revenge, it seldom fails to lower their estimate of the life of man, and renders them less afraid of taking it away in their turn, by acts of personal violence. There is much reason to believe that our public executions have had an *indirect, yet positive tendency* to promote both *murder* and *suicide*.

That they do not strike the populace with a wholesome awe, or prevent the commission of other crimes, is abundantly proved by the frequent and indecent levity of the mob on such occasions; and by the robberies and other heinous offences which so often take place under the very gallows. A young woman, a criminal in one of our prisons, was heard, some time since, to say, "Well, if the worst comes to the worst, I shall but have to *dance for an hour!*" Thus is the notion of death lowered and even made ridiculous! Thus do the dissolute and depraved make light of those terrors of the law, which are far too frequently obtruded on their notice.

Is it not then to be lamented that a practice so inconsistent with the religion which we profess, and with the true welfare of the state itself, should still be continued in a country blessed with a benevolent sovereign, with ministers who are both enlightened and conscientious men, and with a people who have in various ways lifted up a moral and religious standard, which other nations have been glad to follow ?

Deeply, indeed, is the continuance of such a system to be lamented, especially since it is incontrovertibly proved, that punishments of a milder and less injurious nature, are calculated to produce, for every good purpose, a far more powerful effect.

Among these secondary methods of punishment, the foremost is a right application of *prison discipline*,* and we trust we shall

* A strict and even severe prison discipline, may often be very proper for *criminals*—but it is never to be forgotten, that it is wholly inapplicable to persons who are confined in our prisons for debt. We question also whether it can be proper for state offenders—persons imprisoned, however rightly, on *political* grounds. Above all, if the time should ever again arrive, when men shall be consigned to the prison-house for *conscience' sake*, may our systems of disciplinary punishment never be so applied as to add oppression and sorrow to the *bonds of the righteous!*—E. F.

be excused, for having touched on the subject of capital punishment—(a subject which though near to our hearts was not *immediately* before us)—on the ground that the best of substitutes for it will be found in that judicious management of criminals in prison, which it is the object of the present tract to recommend. Let our prison discipline be severe in proportion to the enormity of the crimes of those on whom it is exercised; and let its strictness be such as to deter others from a similar course of iniquity; but let it be accompanied by a religious care, and a *Christian kindness*, and let us ever aim at the diminution of crime, through the just and happy medium OF THE REFORMATION OF CRIMINALS.

* * *Should any further advice or instruction be found requisite in the intervals of the General Meetings, Letters (post paid) to either of the Secretaries of the Society will be attended to.*

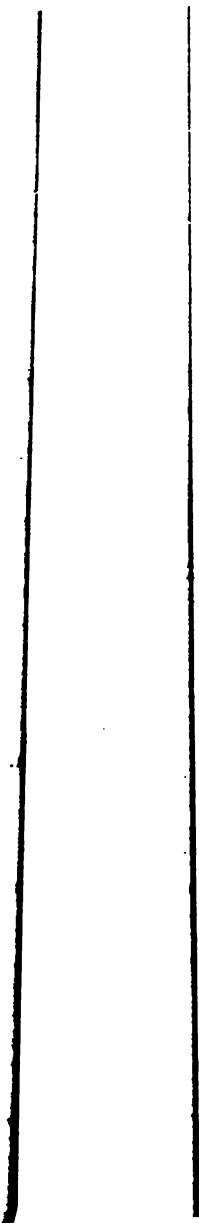
Secretaries.

Mrs. STEINKOPFF, Savoy, Strand.

Miss ROBERTS, Bedford Street, Covent Garden.

Miss REYNOLDS, Carshalton House, Surrey; and

29, Great St. Helens, Bishopsgate Street.



				HOW AND WHEN REMOVED.
28	29	30	31	
				Discharged 6th Month, 10th.
				Penitentiary 6th Month, 15th.
				Transported 6th Month, 20th.

APPENDIX.

THE ARRANGEMENTS OF A WEEK IN NEWGATE, DRAWN UP BY THE LADIES' ASSOCIATION.

EVERY day, except Saturday, previous to entering upon the business of it with the female prisoners, the visiting ladies cause them to be assembled in the committee room, and read to them a portion of the Holy Scriptures. After the women have retired, the monitors are called upon to report the conduct of the individuals in each class, which being confirmed by the matron, it is entered in the class book.

Monday.—Two ladies visit the prison, whose business is to superintend the school; they also provide and distribute such books as are considered suitable to lend for the use of the prisoners.

Tuesday.—Three or four ladies visit this day, they receive and take an accurate account of the quantity of baby linen made up in the previous week for the poor (which is for sale), and give out a fresh supply of work for the following week, paying the prisoners one half of their earnings at the time, and retaining the other half for them when they leave the prison.

Note.—Such persons as have been re-committed, and are in Newgate for the second or third time, have not the same payment allowed for their work as the other women.

Wednesday.—Two ladies visit, who receive, pay for, and give out the work done for sale, consisting of coarse linen, calico, and flannel, which employs such of the women as do not work sufficiently well to be employed in the baby linen.

Thursday.—Three ladies visit, who take charge of the knitting department, which employs a comparatively small number of the prisoners, being almost exclusively given to those incapable of needle-work. This day the prisoners are allowed, with the proportion of their earnings received, to purchase different articles of clothing, but being supplied with a prison dress, these articles are ticketed and placed in a store room, under the care of the matron, till the time of transportation or discharge from prison.

Note.—Any clothing, the property of convicts about to be transported to New South Wales, does not supercede the articles of clothing deemed necessary by government for the use of the women on their voyage.

Friday.—From three to five ladies attend on this day, which is devoted to the reception of visitors, who, after attending the reading, are shewn the work of the women, which they frequently purchase, and by visiting the different departments of the prison, make themselves acquainted with the plans of the Association.

Saturday.—No ladies visit on this day, the prisoners being employed, under the superintendance of the matron, in washing, ironing, and cleaning.

The Sub-Committee for Classification consists of several ladies, who examine, after each sessions, all the newly-

convicted prisoners, entering in a book their names, age, and sentence; ascertain whether they have ever received any religious instruction or education—at what schools—and recommend those who cannot read to the school in the prison. This sub-committee reward the women according to the account of their conduct in the class book: for each mark (+) of misconduct, 3d. is deducted from the value of the reward.

OBJECTS AND RULES OF THE WESTMINSTER ASYLUM.

- I. To afford protection and instruction to females who have been prosecuted and punished for crime, disgraced, but not habitually depraved, anxious to regain a place in society, and desirous of pursuing a new and virtuous course of life.
- II. To attempt the reformation of young females who have not been imprisoned; but, who have been guilty of dishonest practices; *where* the peculiar interest of their cases affords ground of hope for their reformation.
- III. To receive persons, who have neither been dishonest nor have suffered imprisonment; but, who have deviated from the paths of virtue, and have failed of obtaining admittance into other houses of refuge, on the condition of their paying 4s. per week; provided they have not been in the habit of prostitution.
- IV. To prevent crime by providing a shelter for the destitute orphan; who, from early neglect and

total want of education, is incapable of filling a respectable situation, or indeed of gaining her livelihood. And

V. To give immediate protection to females discharged from prison, in cases peculiarly claiming attention.

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

I. If the inmates are fit subjects for this Asylum, they will recollect their former lives only with sorrow and shame, it is therefore expected and positively commanded, that they never make any circumstance relative thereto a subject of conversation, but that they "set a watch before their mouth, and keep the door of their lips."

II. The hours of rising are half-past five and six o'clock from Lady-day to Michaelmas, and half-past six o'clock from Michaelmas to Lady-day; the matron to use her own discretion in directing the change of the hour, or in requiring the women to rise before any of the hours specified, when washing or other extraordinary work is to be done.

III. Half an hour allowed for breakfast, and three quarters of an hour for dinner—with these exceptions, the women continue to be employed from the time of rising till six o'clock in the evening, at the different works assigned them by the matron. At six o'clock they leave off work; and after their evening meal till ten o'clock, devote the rest of the time to religious reading, or receive instruction (if necessary) in reading and writing, and mend their

own clothes. If extraordinary work is to be done, the matrons are to use their discretion as to prolonging the hour of work.

IV. That each person, unless prevented by sickness, shall attend the service of the church morning and evening each Sunday, and on the evenings of Wednesday.

V. That no person, except in cases of sickness, be allowed to be absent from morning and evening prayer at the appointed hour.

VI. That no person be allowed to hold conversation after retiring to bed at night.

VII. That no inmate be allowed to be absent from the Asylum without the especial permission of one of the members of the committee ; when absent with leave, to be accompanied by some person appointed by the head matron, or by one of the matrons themselves.

VIII. The parents, brothers, and sisters of the inmates are allowed to visit them the first Monday in every month, between the hours of one and five, always in presence of the matron. Any indulgence beyond this permission must be granted by the chaplain, or one of the members of the committee.

IX. No person can be admitted into the Asylum after the age of thirty-five, nor can any be received who have ever been in the habit of drinking.

In case of any improper conduct on the part of the women, any dispute amongst themselves, or offence against the rules of the Institution, the matron is directed to separate the offender from her companions for

such a time as the nature of the case may require, and to report the same to the Visiting Committee.

The Westminster Asylum having now reached its tenth Anniversary, the Committee desire to acknowledge the good hand of their God upon them during that period, and to endeavour to direct the attention of the public and their friends who have hitherto assisted them, in a peculiar manner, to the objects of their patronage—they confidently hope, that when these objects are more extensively known, the legitimacy of their claims will not be disputed, and that such a sympathy will be excited, as will induce an increase of annual subscriptions. The present income, combined with the labour of the inmates, is not equivalent to the outgoings, and however important the work is, however interesting their particular position, yet it is often impossible to attend to the applications. The funds of the committee are even now overcharged, and if the divine blessing is to be hoped for on its proceedings, its conduct must exhibit the combination of sound discretion, mingled with faith. During the last year it has been ascertained that eighteen young women, several of whom had been imprisoned for their first offences, are now conducting themselves with peculiar propriety in situations of great respectability. Many more might be spoken of as hopeful and steady, but until a longer time has elapsed from their leaving the Asylum, it is considered satisfactory to speak particularly of them.

The Committee beg leave to add, that any donations of wearing apparel are most acceptable, as the altogether

friendless never fail to form part of the community; all who *have* friends, are required to be clothed by them.

Donations and Subscriptions are received by Messrs.

Hatchard, 189, Piccadilly; Mr. Nisbet, 21, Berner's Street; Messrs. Williams, Deacon, and Labouchere, 20, Birch Lane; at the Religious Societies' House, 32, Sackville Street; and by Mrs. Hill, Matron of the Asylum, Ship Court, York Street.

The situation of those neglected and vicious female children in the metropolis, who are too often a prey to the designing, and early trained to wicked habits, as well as that of many others who may be guilty, but not sentenced to punishment, long claimed the attention of the British Society, and considering it more than possible, that at the tender age at which some are brought to trial, and many detected in dishonest practices, they might be availingly checked in their sad career, taught the performance of their duty, and rendered respectable members of society; an Institution was formed for this object in connection with the British Society, and a distinct committee appointed to superintend its progress. The plan received the approbation of the Secretary of State, as well as of many other benevolent and humane persons. With this encouragement, the Committee proceeded with the undertaking, and opened a House of Discipline, and School of Reform, for viciously disposed, and neglected Female Children, on a small scale at Chelsea.

RULES.

- I. That this Institution be under the superintendence of the British Society of Ladies, for the reformation of Female Prisoners.
- II. That it be managed by a Committee of Ladies, consisting of Six Members, a Treasurer, and a Secretary, with power to add to their number.
- III. That Female Children not under seven years of age, nor above thirteen, who have been found guilty of stealing, or any other offence, causing loss of character, or danger of imprisonment, be considered the objects of this Institution.
- IV. That arrangements be made for the immediate reception of such objects, subject to the approval of the Committee.
- V. That this establishment be under the care of a school-mistress, with such assistance as she may require.
- VI. That the children be carefully and daily instructed in the Holy Scriptures, also taught spelling, reading, and needle-work; and that they be employed in household and other labour, in proportion to their strength.
- VII. That plain and common clothing be provided for them during the time they remain in the Institution, under the direction of the Committee.
- VIII. That the establishment be visited weekly by one or more of the Committee, in rotation.
- IX. That the Committee meet once a quarter, or oftener, for the examination of the children, for the

discharge of the household and other expenses, and to receive the report of the school-mistress respecting her charge.

X. That the Committee have power to form other regulations, from time to time, as may appear requisite, not inconsistent with the rules now established.

SCHOOL OF REFORM.

In the year 1825 this school was established upon the recommendation and under the patronage of the British Society, who, in their visits to Newgate, had found many girls committed to that prison for stealing, and whose object it was to place them under strict discipline and wholesome restraint, thus preserving them from that destruction which evidently awaited them. There are likewise received into this Institution girls, who, by the commission of crimes, have forfeited their claims to other more desirable means of instruction. The house accommodates thirty-six girls, who are under the instruction of three matrons: they are employed in washing, needle and house-work, and taught plain cooking. Two years is the period specified for their improvement. The parents are expected to pay as much towards their board and clothing as their circumstances admit. One hundred and thirteen girls have been received since the commencement; of these, *only two* have been known to

be recommitted. No corporeal punishment is allowed; but solitary confinement for a certain number of hours, during which, employment is provided; this has been found very beneficial, together with an habitual system of wholesome restraint, mingled with judicious encouragement and kind treatment; but above all, the benefit resulting is to be mainly attributed to the diligent and practical inculcation of religious principles, and the unremitting endeavours to impress their minds with the value of the Sacred Scriptures. As few of the parents are able to contribute more than a third of the expense, and those of several of the children taken from prisons are unknown to the committee, it follows of course that the pecuniary aid of the benevolent is very necessary for supporting the school.

A large proportion of the girls who have been received are now filling respectable places in their own rank of society.

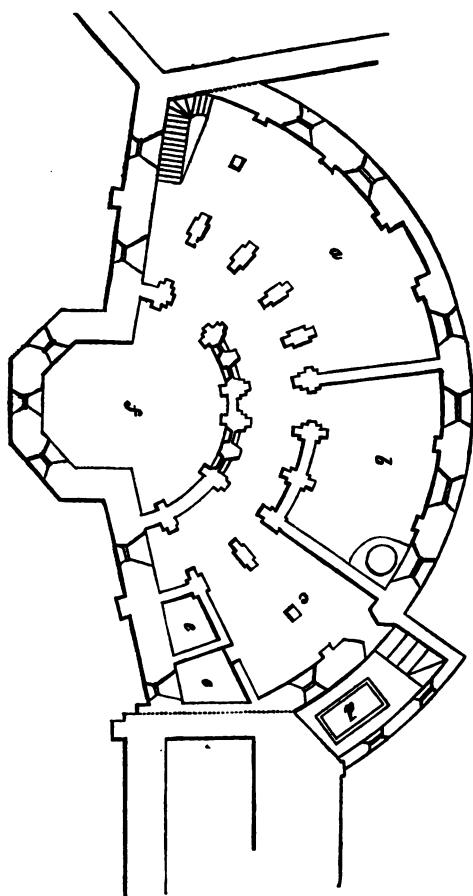
Every Monday a Committee of Ladies attend the school, which is situate at No. 2, Paradise Row, Chelsea; and on Tuesdays it is open to the inspection of Subscribers.

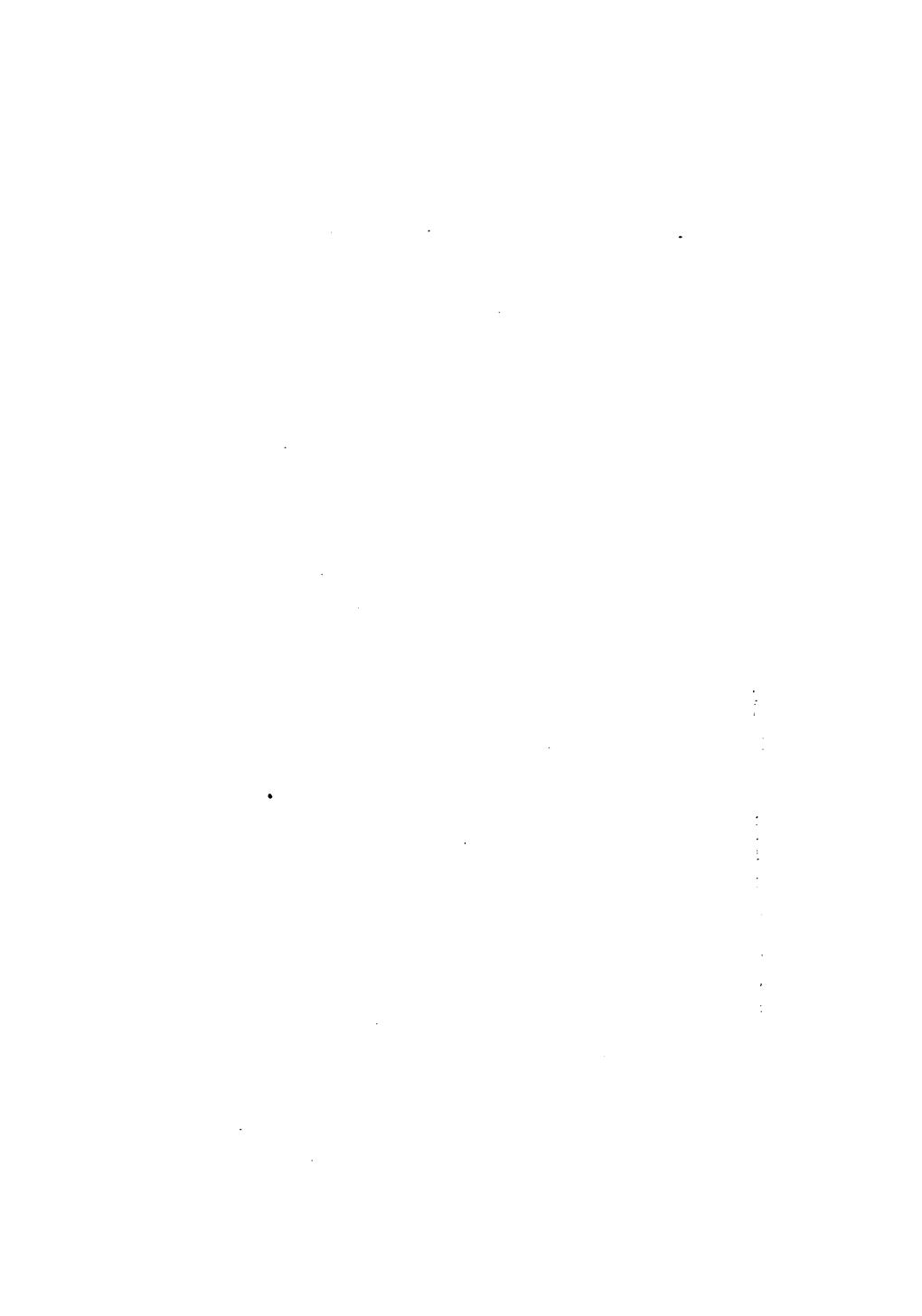
Subscriptions and Donations are received by the Secretary, Mrs. B. Shaw, No. 1, South Buildings, Clapham Common; at the School; and at the Banking House of Messrs. Hankey and Co. 7, Fenchurch Street.

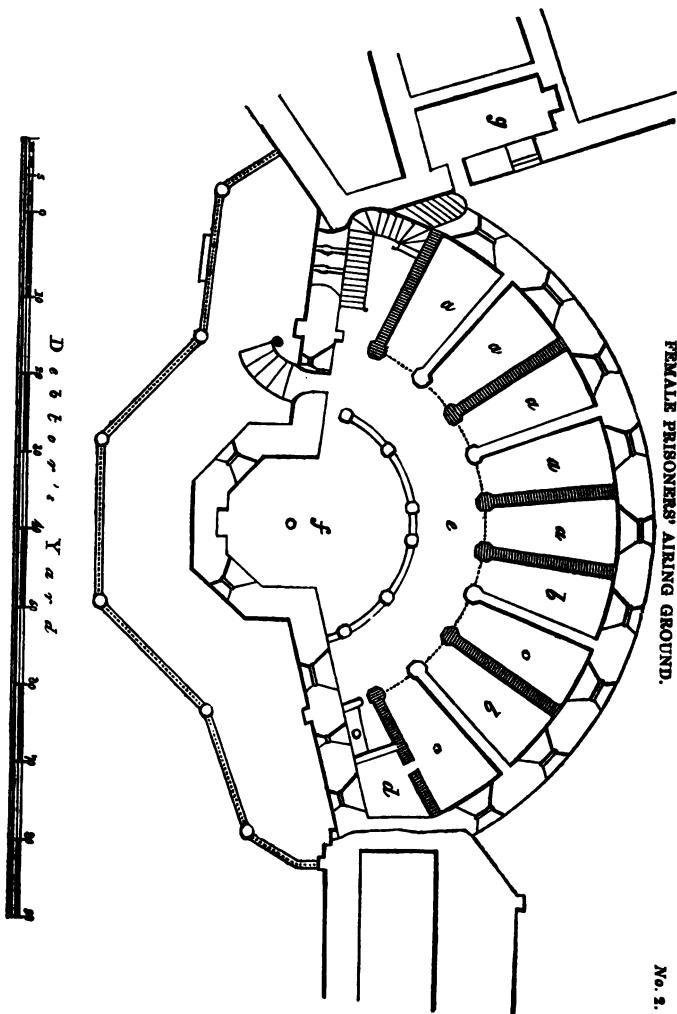
PLAN OF LANCASTER CASTLE.

THE FEMALE PRISONERS' TOWER.

No. 1.







FEMALE PRISONERS' AIRING GROUND.

No. 2.



REFERENCES.

No. 1.

THE basement story, whose massy stone arches support the floors above. *a.* Kitchen. *b.* Wash-house. *c.* Drying-stove. *d.* Steam-boiler for warming the building by pipes carried along each gallery. *e.* Coal cellars. *f.* Store cellar.

FIRST FLOOR, No. 2

a. Cells to hold one, two, or three, beds; and are also used as day-rooms for such prisoners as are not employed at the mills or in the kitchen and wash-house, and are occupied in such work as is convenient, as sewing, winding weft for the weavers, &c. In *b. b.* are corn mills and dressing-machines, which are turned by hand in *c. c.* The cells are all very light and airy, having large casements, and being separated from the gallery by a strong iron railing only, as marked by the dotted lines. *d.* Room for confining refractory prisoners. *e.* Gallery. *f.* Matron's room, from the centre of which she can see the whole of the cells at once, between the pillars, being closed by glazed casements.

There are four other floors above this, exactly similar, except the upper one, which is divided into five rooms in the outer circle by partition walls corresponding with those coloured darker in the plan: the middle room of which is a store room for clothing, &c.; and the two larger rooms, on each side, are intended for looms, if necessary. The three intermediate floors are cells for different classes of prisoners. Over the matron's room is her bed-room; above that the school-

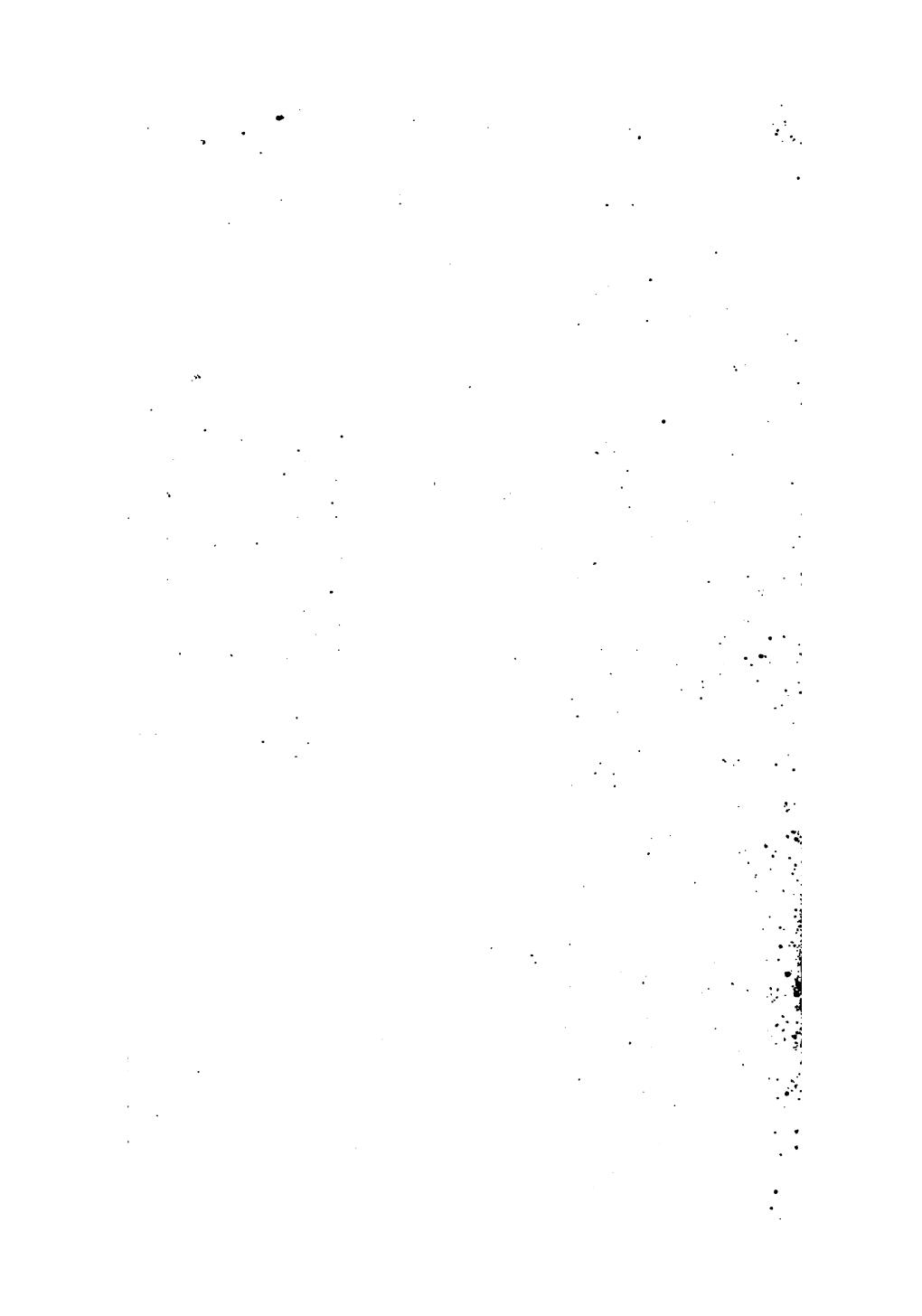
room, where also the prisoners are assembled daily and have a portion of Scripture read to them; above that is the dining-room for the prisoners; and above that a similar room not particularly appropriated. The centre part of the building is carried a story higher than the rest of the tower, forming an octagon turret, which is a well-ventilated infirmary, having windows on every side. *g.* Room taken from another tower, and used as a nursery when they are young children, which opens into the women's airing ground, to which they have access at all times during the day.

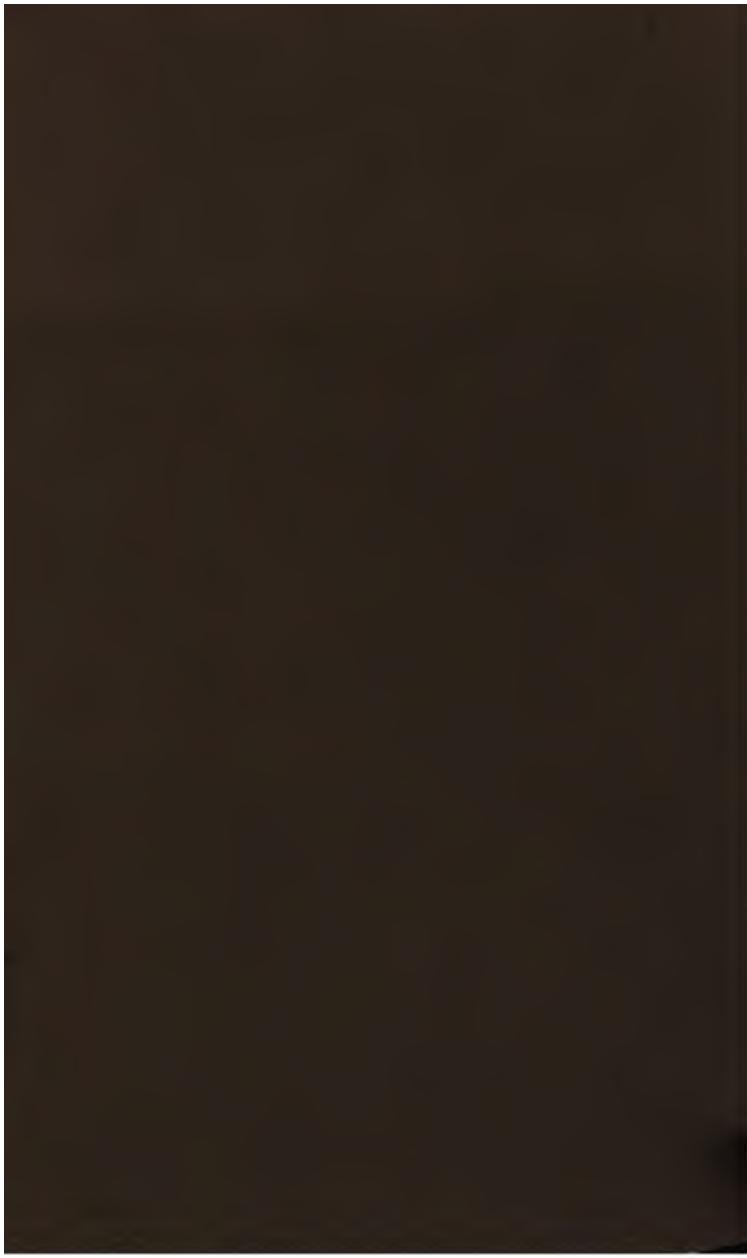
The gallery is closed from the stairs by a partition and door, so that the matron can pass from one floor to another without the prisoners being aware of her approach. Mr. Higgin (the governor) thinks it would be an improvement upon this building, if the floors of the centre part, instead of being on the same level as the cells and gallery, were upon an intermediate one, so as to have two heights of cells under inspection from the matron's rooms at the same time. They were also circumscribed in space for the erection of this building, by other buildings previously erected; otherwise the circle might have been extended so as to increase the number of cells without any disadvantage.

The whole building is of freestone. The floors of the cells and gallery are of large stones, reaching from wall to wall, which form the cieling of those below them, so that no wood is used in that part of the building.

THE END.









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